BEAR

Bureau of Electronic & Appliance Repair

Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs)

MAY 2003   CONSUMER INFORMATION SHEET

Californians Who Need PDA Repairs are Protected by the Same Consumer-Assurance Laws that Benefit Personal Computer Owners

When personal digital assistants (PDAs) initially entered the market they were primarily used as electronic calendars, address books and to-do lists. But PDAs have evolved to the point where they are virtually personal computers, with the power and capabilities that desktop computers were capable of only a few years ago. PDAs will continue to become more sophisticated.

Since PDAs fall within the definition of "computer systems," California consumers seeking repairs or service contracts for PDAs benefit from the same consumer-protection laws covering personal computers. The laws apply to PDAs and computers used for personal, family, household or home-office use.

The law requires -- and you should expect -- a repair dealer to:
- Perform repairs competently
- Inform you in writing when a diagnosis fee will be charged and the amount of the charge
- Provide a written estimate of the total repair cost
- Furnish an itemized repair invoice of all labor performed and parts installed
- Return replaced parts (except parts specifically exempted from this requirement)

The law prohibits:
- False or misleading advertising
- Fraud or dishonest dealing
- False promises likely to induce you to authorize repairs
- Willful departure from accepted trade standards
- Negligence or incompetence in repairs

Check That Your Repair Dealer is Properly Registered

Companies that repair, service and/or offer service contracts on PDAs must register with the California Bureau of Electronic and Appliance Repair (BEAR). Dealers must display their registration. Consumers can check repair dealer registration online at the BEAR Web site, www.bear.ca.gov. You can also access more information on electronic and appliance consumer protections, including how to evaluate service contracts, and how to file a complaint against a repair dealer.

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